REMARKS

The Specification has been amended. Claims 1 - 15 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced with these amendments, all of which are supported in the specification as originally filed. Claims 1 - 15 remain in the application.

I.   Rejection under 35 U. S. C. §112, second paragraph

Paragraph 2 of the Office Action dated March 23, 2006 (hereinafter, "the Office Action") states that Claims 3, 9, and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In particular, the term "the inbound packet header" is stated as lacking antecedent basis. Appropriate amendments are submitted herein, and the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw this rejection.

II.   Rejection under 35 U. S. C. §103(a)

Paragraph 4 of the Office Action state that Claims 1 - 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U. S. Patent 6,049,834 to Khabradar et al. (hereinafter, "Khabradar") in view of U. S. Patent 6,948,003 to Newman et al. (hereinafter, "Newman") This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants have amended their independent Claims 1, 2, 8, and 12 to more clearly specify limitations of their claimed invention. Applicants respectfully submit that a combination of Khabradar and Newman (assuming, *arguendo*, that such combination can be made and that one of skill in the art would be motivated to attempt it) does not teach all limitations of these

independent claims, as will now be discussed.

Independent Claim 1 (as amended) specifies:

A method of improving data transfer in a virtual server environment of a computing network, comprising steps of:

receiving a plurality of packets to be routed to or from a plurality of virtual servers operating in a single physical device;

providing an internal routing table for data link layer routing to or from selected ones of the virtual servers, wherein entries in the internal routing table are learned dynamically while processing selected ones of the received packets at a network layer; and

using the internal routing table for routing other ones of the received packets to or from the selected ones of the virtual servers at the data link layer, wherein:

the selected ones of the received packets comprise, for each supported pair of input data link layer component and output data link layer component, a first-processed one of the packets which arrives using the input data link layer component and which is addressed to the output data link layer component; and

the other ones of the received packets comprise, for each of the supported pairs of input data link layer component and output data link layer component, subsequently-processed ones of the packets which arrive using the input data link layer component and which are addressed to the output data link layer component. (emphasis added)

Applicants respectfully submit that neither Khabradar nor Newman, nor a combination thereof, teaches (at least) the above-underlined limitations of Applicants' independent Claim 1. Claim 1 is therefore deemed patentable over these references.

Independent Claim 2 (as amended) specifies:

A method of improving data transfer in a virtual server environment of a communications network, the method comprising steps of:

providing a concentrator that combines traffic from a plurality of virtual

servers operating in a single physical device into a single outbound stream; and
        routing packets of the combined traffic, further comprising steps of:
                intercepting packets of the traffic at a data link layer of a
communications protocol stack;
                comparing a destination address of each intercepted packet to
entries in a data link layer routing table comprising at least one entry, each entry
specifying an (input data link layer component, output data link layer component)
pair, to determine if a matching entry is present in the table, the matching entry
specifying a data link layer component on which the intercepted packet arrived as
the input data link layer component of the pair and the destination address of the
intercepted packet as the output data link layer component of the pair;
                forwarding the intercepted packet to a higher layer of the
communications protocol stack if the matching entry is not found by the comparing
step, for routing by the higher layer; and
                performing data link layer routing of the intercepted packet,
without intervention of the higher layer, if the matching entry is found by the
comparing step. (emphasis added)

        Applicants respectfully submit that neither Khabradar nor Newman, nor a combination

thereof, teaches (at least) the above-underlined limitations of Applicants' independent Claim 2.

Independent Claims 8 and 12 specify similar limitations. Claims 2, 8, and 12 are therefore deemed

patentable over these references.

        Applicants' dependent Claims 3 - 7, 9 - 11, and 13 - 15 are deemed patentable over the

references by virtue of (at least) the patentability of the independent claims from which they

depend. The Examiner is therefore respectfully requested to withdraw the §103 rejection of all

claims as currently presented.

III.   Conclusion

        Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the pending rejected claims, withdrawal

of all presently outstanding rejections, and allowance of all claims at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,

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